

## Children of older dads at higher risk for psychiatric disorders: Is mutated sperm to blame?

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.**

Ever since it was first observed that the children of older fathers are at a higher risk for [psychiatric disorders](#), sperm cells have taken the blame because they can accumulate harmful new mutations. But new [research](#) suggests that those accusations may have been false.

Instead, the main culprit might just be plain old, conventional patterns of inheritance — although there could be many elements at play.

Scientists had assumed that accumulated were what caused the higher rates of disorders like [autism](#) and [schizophrenia](#) among children with older-than-average fathers. After all, the [evidence](#) that these mutations were accumulating was very solid.

But a team led by researchers at the University of Queensland, in Australia, wanted to question that conventional wisdom about whether all of those new mutations could actually account for all of the increased risk. So they built five mathematical models.

But no matter how they swung the models, those new mutations that accumulate in sperm could only explain 10 to 20 percent of that increased risk.

**Read full, original post:** [Why are kids of older dads at higher risk for mental illness? Don't blame mutated sperm](#)